

Commercial Truck Driver Protest - Operational Impacts - Situational Report - January 28, 2022

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<i>Situational Report</i>
Commercial Truck Driver Protest Operational Impacts
January 28, 2022

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Background

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On January 15, 2022, an Order of Council (OIC) was put in-place to mandate vaccinations for commercial truck drivers crossing the border. As a result, commercial truck drivers around the country have organized and started protesting outside port of entries (POEs) by blocking roads and slowing traffic, along with a convoy of commercial vehicles headed towards Ottawa to protest outside Parliament.

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Convoy status:

South Route (SOR/GTAR):

- ~ January 27, 2022 – Convoys from Fort Erie and Sarnia plan to depart for Ottawa on January 27, with potential stopover in Kingston for rest and to meet with additional convoys. The South Route convoy from Windsor is continuing with “slow rolls” today and will be moving onwards to Kingston on January 28.
- ~ January 28, 2022 - The convoy arrived in Kingston and is expected to depart for Ottawa on January 28 at 0830 ET and is expected to arrive on Parliament Hill at 1200 ET.

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West Route (PAC):

- January 27, 2022 - The "Convoy for Freedom 2022" departed B.C. on January 23, 2022, and will make its way to Ottawa. According to the itinerary, on January 27, it will be travelling through Thunder Bay towards Sault Ste. Marie.
- January 28, 2022 - The convoy is expected to leave Sault Ste. Marie on January 28 at 0600 ET and is expected to stop in multiple locations, including Sudbury and North Bay, to end their day at 1800 ET in Arnprior, ON. This convoy is expected to arrive on Parliament Hill at 1200 ET on January 29.

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East Route (ATL/QC/NOR):

- January 27, 2022 - The Freedom Convoy 2022 website has not updated this route, however, has indicated on their website that this route is still scheduled to be arriving in Ottawa as of January 29, 2022.
- January 28, 2022 - Based on the website, this convoy is expected to leave Rivière-du-Loup at 0700 ET on January 28 and will make multiple stops, including in Quebec City. They are expected to arrive in Vankleek Hill, Ontario, at 1500 ET to end their day. This convoy is expected to arrive on Parliament Hill at 1200 ET on January 29.

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United States:

- January 28, 2022 - "Freedom Fighter Nation Protest" (USA): An advocacy group called "Freedom Fighter Nation" is calling for protests on the US side of the border "to join our Canadian brothers and sisters in the Fight for Freedom." Identified locations of these protests are currently in Houlton, Maine; Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan; and Sweet Grass, Montana.

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Atlantic Region

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Operational Plans have been developed and shared with HQ.

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The region is currently monitoring potential convoy protests with three routes specific to the Atlantic Region.

Local brokerages are considering diverting the commercial traffic to other POE's during this protest period. St Stephen would be the logical alternative, despite there being the possibility of an offshoot protest in that area as well. The next strategy would be for the brokers to simply tell the drivers to wait out the protest further south.

January 28, 2022 - Brokerages have now stated that they will advise drivers to enter Canada before or after the planned protest activities. Also for the drivers to consider the weather forecasted for Saturday in their crossing times. At this point, they will not be diverting traffic to alternative sites. Saturdays are typically not busy with commercial traffic at this location so will have minimal impact.

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Woodstock: A BIS line call was received from someone representing the "Freedom Trucker Convoy" indicating that a blockade will take place at the Woodstock POE and possibly St. Stephen 3rd Bridge for a period of 24 hours. The caller also mentioned that similar activities would be taking place at the

Sweet Grass and Sault-Ste-Marie crossings. Unclear if this caller is affiliated with the movements occurring in the US.

Quebec Region

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On January 28, 2022, truckers will be meeting at three POEs (Saint-Theophile, Stanstead, and Saint-Bernard-de-Lacolle), will drive on Highway 40 until Vankleek Hill (ON), and will move onward to Ottawa on January 29, 2022.

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Southern Ontario Region

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Rainbow Bridge: Information has been received from various open and law enforcement sources indicating a potential mobile protest at the Rainbow Bridge POE on January 29, 2022. Information suggests that the demonstration will occur on both the Canadian and American sides of the border. So far, this movement is being supported by the PPC, Freedom 2022, Let Us Reunite, and Lockdowns No More. SOR IEOD is engaged and monitoring.

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Prairie Region

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Operational Plans have been developed and shared with HQ.

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Coutts: An Instagram movement called **S.37** is starting a protest on January 29, 2022 and will remain in the area of the POE until all mandates and restrictions are lifted. Information gathered suggests that trucks and vehicles will block access in both directions. The organizer contacted the CBSA to confirm that they will let emergency vehicles and CBSA employees through to the POE. An action plan has been put in place. RCMP and other officials have been contacted.

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Carway: A blockade action is being planned at the Carway POE on Saturday, January 29, 2022. According to social media, the intention to block access to the border. The group has indicated they will allow trucks to pass.

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Emerson: Manitoba Operation Freedom Border Protest is set to occur this Saturday, January 29, starting at 0500 CT at the Emerson POE. The protest will start as a slow roll event but the intention is to become a complete standstill in order to block access to the border.

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Intelligence and Enforcement

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Key Points:

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- ~ Reliable estimates on the number of convoys, vehicles and people arriving in Ottawa for 28/29 January continue to be difficult to obtain. The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) reported 551 vehicles in Ontario at the time of this writing and will continue providing updates as information becomes available.

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- ~ The duration of the event in Ottawa is still unknown. Impromptu protests will likely occur with little or no social media advertising beforehand due to the ability to mobilize a large group of people on short notice. Online advertisements for public order events at various overpasses throughout Ontario have been identified with the intent to support and cheer on the convoys coming from various routes. In addition, multiple local events within Canadian provinces have been advertised to take place on January 29/14 in solidarity with the main convoy in Ottawa and could occur at border points or the following government buildings: 15 16 • Victoria, Legislative Assembly • Vancouver, Canada Place • Calgary, Prince Island Park • Edmonton, Legislature building • Regina, Legislative building • Winnipeg, The Forks • Toronto, Union Station • Montreal, Place des arts • Moncton, Riverfront Park • St John's, Harbourside Park

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- ~ The RCMP has reported that while there have been some online calls for violent action during and after the protests they have not observed any credible threat of violence in these online conversations at this time.

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BACKGROUND

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In January 2022, the Government of Canada announced a federal vaccine mandate requiring that all Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) drivers crossing the border must be fully vaccinated as of January 15, 2022. In response to this requirement, a national event entitled "Freedom Convoy 2022" (AKA #BearHug2.0) was planned via social media, which advertised as a fundraiser and then gained momentum on other platforms. The convoy, which began on January 22 in various provinces, is likely to arrive in Ottawa between January 28 and 29, 2022. Funding for the "Freedom Convoy 2022" was at \$5.2 million at the time of this writing; these funds are currently being withheld by GoFundMe until the protest can demonstrate that they will have adequate financial management and oversight.

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SCOPE AND SCALE

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The total number of participants remains undetermined, however The OPP has identified at least 551 vehicles currently travelling along three routes, north, east and south, towards Ottawa. Transport trucks and individuals will arrive in Ottawa between January 28 and 29, 2022. The length of the protest is unknown, however the ultimate goal is to cause supply shortages forcing the Government of Canada to abandon its COVID-19 public health measures, which are perceived as an overreach and tyranny by protestors.

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CONVOY PARTICIPANTS, SUPPORT, AND POTENTIAL THREAT ACTORS

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While CMV drivers and their goals are the core group, there remains the potential for non-aligned participation and support. Ideologically motivated individuals who are anti-government, anti-authority and conspiratorial in nature will be present at this protest. Open source reports indicate that extremist movements such as the neo-fascist Diagonal network have expressed support for the convoy online and have issued calls to turn the protest in Ottawa into a Canadian version of the January 6, 2021 storming of the U.S. Capitol Building. The convoy may also attract individuals with racially motivated and ethno-nationalist views though the protest itself is not about these ideologies. In addition,

individuals who do not associate with any particular group but are opposed to public health measures in relation to COVID-19 will be sympathetic to the convoy and may participate. The presence of such individuals does not mean there will be violence, however, the threat is elevated as we have reports of protestors verbally abusing police officers at previous protests.

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SUPPORT FROM LIKE MINDED INDIVIDUALS IN THE U.S.

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The RCMP reports:

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INFLUENCE OF ONLINE RHETORIC

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Canadian law enforcement agencies including the Ottawa Police have expressed concern over some of the online rhetoric regarding the trucker convoy and the planned protest. Government officials have noted that to date while small numbers of supporters have appeared at all of the stops by the convoy there has been no violent incidents reported. The online rhetoric has now encompassed a variety of conspiracy theories beyond the anti-vaccination movement including questioning the legitimacy of the Federal Government and QAnon-like beliefs regarding government officials engaging in illegal activities. Some online postings have urged violence including attempting to turn the protest in Ottawa into a riot similar to the January 6, 2021 assault on the US Capitol Building. It is not clear at this time how many individuals, if any, are planning to respond to the online calls for violent protest by engaging in acts of violence (including attempting to assault government officials or the destruction of property). The RCMP and Parliamentary Protective Service are standing up a National Capital Region command centre to coordinate communications between all the agencies that will be involved in providing security during the planned protest in Ottawa.

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The RCMP reports:

Chatter online is also beginning to question what will happen if the protest is ignored by the government. Some responses include hostile rhetoric suggesting that the protest needs to “get violent”, while other imagery is suggestive of a permanent gridlock around Ottawa until “freedom” is restored. No credible threat of violence has been observed in these conversations at this time.

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IMPACT ON CBSA

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Available information does not suggest that these convoys will pose a threat to Officers, at present. Potential for delays in and around land border Ports of Entry impacting Commercial and Travellers border wait times (BWT).

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“Hold the Line” Protest (SOR): Intel has reported on an electronic poster titled “Hold the Line” being posted regarding activity on January 29, 2022, for those who cannot attend protests in Ottawa.

Truckers and supporters are being encouraged to block the border wherever they are located and to hold position while the convoy is stationed in Ottawa.

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Coutts POE (PRA): An Instagram movement called **s.37** is starting a protest on January 29, 2022 and will remain in the area of the Coutts POE (and potentially Carway POE) until all mandates and restrictions are lifted. Information gathered suggests that trucks and vehicles will block access in both directions. The organizer contacted the CBSA to confirm that they will let emergency vehicles and CBSA employees through to the POE. An action plan has been put in place. RCMP and other officials have been contacted.

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Emerson POE (PRA): "Manitoba Operation Freedom Border Protest" is set to occur this Saturday, January 29, starting at 05h00 at the Emerson POE. The protest will start as a slow roll event but the intention is to become a complete standstill in order to block access to the border.

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Internal Taskforce

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No updates to provide.

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Communications

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Media coverage:

- ~ The top story in this morning's clippings continues to be the trucking issue, with an article in the [National Post](#) shedding light on the demands of the Freedom Convoy 2022, which include the immediate reversal of absolutely all extraordinary measures related to COVID-19. No mandatory masking, no vaccine passports and the reinstatement of every Canadian fired due to their vaccination status. The article dispels earlier understandings that the convoy was in protest of the trucker vaccine, but makes it clear that they are on a mission to dissolve all COVID-related mandates.
- ~ [Postmedia](#) is reporting that Alberta Premier Jason Kenny has become the voice for truckers as he continues to highlight his opposition to trucker vaccine mandates at the National Governors Association annual meeting in Washington, DC this weekend.

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Media calls:

- ~ Two new media calls this morning related to comments made last evening on the Fox News program hosted by Tucker Carlson, where a Canadian trucker claimed when he crossed the border that CBSA had already identified his cell phone and had matched it up with his vax pass QR code. (Toronto Sun + CBC).
- ~ There remains two open media calls asking about the number of FN truck drivers turned away since January 15:
 - 1.~ Globe & Mail / Kristy Kirkup + Marieke Walsh (received Jan. 19)

2.~ CTV News / Glen McGregor (received Jan. 21)

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Other Governmental Departments

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Government Operations Centre:

- ~ January 28, 2022 - As part of the protest, Canada Unity plans to present a request (MOU) to the Governor General and Senate for the removal of various COVID19 related Public Health Order restrictions. Some supporters suggested they would not leave Ottawa until vaccine mandates for public servants, Canadian travelers and cross-border truckers are lifted. An event Organizer stated the plan is to "gridlock the city, while leaving room for traffic to businesses and emergency vehicles to get through" while holding events with speakers at a yet to be disclosed stage location. A joint communication strategy is being developed by the City of Ottawa to ensure the public is informed of traffic and transit plans throughout the demonstration. Ottawa police are planning for around 1,000 to 2,000 vehicles, while also noting the Freedom Convoy has so far been peaceful and cooperative with police and city officials in other jurisdictions.

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Transport Canada:

- ~ January 28, 2022 - Transport Canada has informed the CBSA that, as a result of the anticipated protest, the Transport Canada Situation Centre will temporarily relocate to s.37 s.37 as of 1500 ET on January 27, 2022.

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